

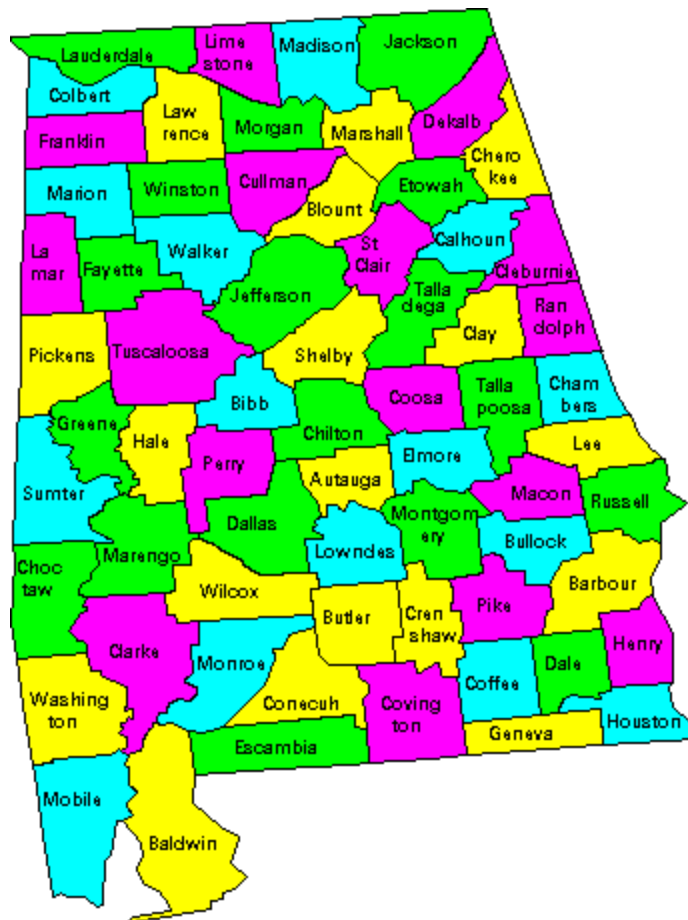
# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### Birmingham, Alabama

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

August 2000



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Birmingham**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population: 265,968 (Birmingham); 651,525 (Jefferson County, 1990 Census)
- Race/Ethnicity: 64.2% white; 35.1% African American; 0.1% American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut; 0.5% Asian or Pacific Islander; 0.1% other; 0.4% Hispanic origin

### **Politics<sup>2</sup>**

- Mayor: Bernard Kincaid
- City Council members (Districts 1-9, respectively): Don MacDermott; Bill Johnson; James D. Blake; Aldrich Gunn; William A. Bell (President); Pat Alexander; Sandra Little; Lee Loder; Leroy Bandy
- Chief of Police: W.M. Coppage

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)<sup>3</sup>  
The Gulf Coast HIDTA was designated in 1996 and is responsible for Baldwin, Jefferson, Mobile, and Montgomery Counties in Alabama. In addition to Alabama, the Gulf Coast HIDTA is also responsible for counties in Louisiana and Mississippi. This Gulf Coast area serves as a gateway for illicit drugs through seven deep water ports, vast coastal waterways, and an extensive system of commercial and private airports. The region's central location makes it attractive for traffickers with bases of operations on either the East or West coasts of the United States. Traffickers move imported cocaine powder to locations such as Birmingham, Alabama or Jackson, Mississippi and then convert it to crack cocaine.
- Executive Office of Weed and Seed<sup>4</sup>  
Now in its third year of funding, the Birmingham area Weed and Seed continues to strengthen an ongoing partnership with participating organizations to provide needed services in the target area. This target area, West End, was chosen as an area that could benefit from Weed and Seed efforts.

### **Crime and Drug-Related Crime**

- Preliminary data for 1999 show that there were 20,868 index crime offenses known to the police in Birmingham during this time. In 1998, there had been 22,688 such offenses known to the Birmingham police.<sup>5</sup>
- In 1999, there were 78 murders known to the police in Birmingham. There were 85 murders known to the police in 1998.<sup>6</sup>

#### Number of Offenses Known to Police, Birmingham, 1998-99

Offense	1998	1999
Murder	85	78
Forcible Rape	206	212
Robbery	969	939
Aggravated Assault	1,887	1,614
Burglary	4,130	3,855
Larceny-theft	12,613	12,035
Motor Vehicle Theft	2,643	1,977
Arson	155	158
Modified Crime Index Total	22,688	20,868

- In 1999, 63.8% of the 738 adult male arrestees sampled in Birmingham tested positive for drugs at the time of their arrest. 53.2% of the 111 adult female arrestees sampled tested positive.<sup>7</sup>

#### Percent of Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, Birmingham, 1999

Offense	Cocaine		Marijuana		Methamphet.		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	28.4	14.3	35.8	42.9	0.0	0.0	54.1	50.0
Property	44.4	30.6	37.3	14.3	0.0	0.0	69.9	40.8
Drug	41.3	50.0	49.0	40.9	0.5	4.5	74.8	77.3
Sales	34.6	--	50.0	--	0.0	--	69.2	--
Possession	42.7	50.0	48.6	40.9	0.5	4.5	76.2	77.3
Prostitution	37.5	100.0	12.5	25.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	100.0
Other	33.4	36.7	40.1	36.7	0.0	0.0	61.1	60.0

#### Drugs<sup>8</sup>

- Law enforcement officials in Birmingham report drug use as stable or up.

#### Law Enforcement Report of Drug Use, Birmingham, 1998

	Use	Who's Using	Prevalent Method of Use	Drugs in Comb.	Who's Selling	Price/Purity
Heroin	Stable	Older users White males	Injection		Young African American males	\$125 ¼ gram; low purity
Cocaine/ Crack	Up	Middle-class use is up; More young users	Snorting Smoking	Marijuana	Young African American males	\$50/gram; variable in price/purity
Marijuana	Up	"Everyone"		Cocaine	Sellers in early 20's – early 30's	\$700- \$1200/lb

### Juveniles

- In 1999, 45.3% of the juvenile male arrestees sampled in Birmingham tested positive for drugs at the time of their arrest.<sup>9</sup>

Percent of Male Juvenile Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, Birmingham, 1999

Offense	N	Cocaine	Marijuana	Any Drug
Violent	34	2.9	44.1	44.1
Property	26	11.5	46.2	53.8
Drug	10	0.0	70.0	70.0
Sales	0	--	--	--
Possession	10	0.0	70.0	70.0
Other	48	2.1	33.3	35.4
All Others	16	0.0	25.0	25.0

### Consequences of Use

- There were 92 drug-related deaths reported by Medical Examiners (ME) in Birmingham during 1998. Cocaine was mentioned in 47 (51.1%) of these deaths.<sup>10</sup>

Number of Drug Mentions (Selected Drugs) Reported by MEs, Birmingham, 1995-98

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Cocaine	37	45	47	47
Heroin/Morphine	6	3	5	1
Marijuana/Hashish	1	--	3	2
Methadone	9	7	7	11
Total Drug Abuse Deaths	64	75	88	92

### Enforcement

- As of October 1998, there were a total of 1,179 full-time law enforcement employees in Birmingham. 904 of these employees were police officers and 275 were civilians.<sup>11</sup>
- Gulf Coast HIDTA Initiative in Birmingham:<sup>12</sup>
  - Jefferson County Drug Task Force: targets major drug traffickers operating in and around Birmingham; focuses on methamphetamine distribution in the area, which has increased exponentially.

### Courts

- There are two drug courts in Birmingham that have been operating for over 2 years. There is also one drug court being planned in Birmingham.<sup>13</sup>
- The Birmingham Municipal Court has four courtrooms found in two locations (Traffic Court, South Court, Night Court, and the Misdemeanor Court).<sup>14</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>
- <sup>2</sup> City of Birmingham Web site: <http://www.ci.bham.al.us>
- <sup>3</sup> Gulf Coast HIDTA Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta/gulf-fs.html>
- <sup>4</sup> Weed and Seed Web site: <http://www.weedseed.org>
- <sup>5</sup> FBI, *Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report, 1999*, May 2000: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/prelim99.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1999 Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program: Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, June 2000: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/99adltfind.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> ONDCP, *Pulse Check, Trends in Drug Abuse, January/June 1998*, Winter 1998
- <sup>9</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1999 Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program: Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, June 2000: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/99adltfind.pdf>
- <sup>10</sup> SAMHSA, *Drug Abuse Warning Network Annual Medical Examiner Data 1999*, March 2000: [http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/DAWN/98me\\_annual.pdf](http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/DAWN/98me_annual.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> FBI, *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports, 1998*, October 1999: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr.html>
- <sup>12</sup> Gulf Coast HIDTA Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta/gulf-fs.html>
- <sup>13</sup> OJP Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, March 31, 2000
- <sup>14</sup> City of Birmingham Web site: <http://www.ci.bham.al.us>

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